MAD WITH THE HEAT

By EDGERTON FRANKLIN.

The sounder called, in Wilkes' lazy way—Wilkes up the line at Bradford—and Belcher awoke from his doze and answered.

"Seen the president?" inquired his sounder.

Belcher ticked back that he had not, and inquired if there was any news.

The sounder said: "Old man's either gone through on one of the fast trains or is going through. Stop his train and thank him for me. Now, shut up!"

Belcher snarled as he turned away from the table. That was Wilkes' facetious way of saying "Good morning" over the telegraph wire. It made him tired.

Everything made Belcher tired. He rose wearily and shuffled out to the little platform of Raynor station. Twelve years of looking at that platform had made him dead tired.

Oh, yes, it was unusually warm that day, Belcher reflected, as he glanced at the thermometer and noted that, in the shade, it stood just 114! It was hot enough to make a man sit down again, so Belcher sat on the edge of the platform, his face in his dry palms.

Poor old Belcher! At thirty he looked forty, and felt fifty. He had entered the W. & E. service, right here at Raynor, when eighteen years of age, a graduated telegrapher, at $12 a week.

He had also assumed the duties of station, freight and express agent, porter, ticket agent, track-walker and information bureau to the two or three dozen who detrained there monthly. And he still earned $12 a week.

Not that he had not been buoyant and ambitious at first. Why, at first he would have bet ten years of his existence that he'd be chief train-dispatcher, at the very least, by this time. But the monotony of the thing, the heat in summer and the cold in winter, the twice-a-day tramp, with the station and Benker's shabby farmhouse at the respective ends, had worked into Belcher.

His head had a queer feeling. He rubbed it stupidly. Probably it was the heat; Belcher didn't care much. He only wished he had the president sitting there in that soundless hell, to talk things over and say that he was sorry the matter hadn't been attended to before, and that he'd raise Belcher at least five dollars at once. If he didn't say that, Belcher had a notion that he'd throttle him.

With another groan, Belcher shuffled to the end of the platform and extracted from the closet something of his own contrivance—a sledge and a strip of iron, with a small spike at either end. Whether he felt lazy or not, he'd have to pull together that crack in the tie next the switch and keep it from spreading wide open before the track repairers finally worked around to replacing the tie—some seventy or eighty years hence.

Wearily, he shuffled across the track and looked the thing over. Yes, about two weeks more, or a good rain, and there'd be one tie split in two and a loose rail.

There was no way of fixing it, for the mechanism of that particular switch, locked or open, usually declined to operate with anything less than a hammer, and now it was twisted and broken to bits! Still more, the morning express ran on mighty close time. And—

"What the dickens are you doing?" a loud voice buzzed into his spinning brain.

Belcher turned quickly. He stared. He stared harder still! As certainly as he breathed, it was President Bullton, black-clad, puffy, red-faced, the very gentleman with whom Belcher had wanted to hobnob—or slaughter!

"That was deliberate destruction of the company's property!" thundered the bulky man. "I saw it—"

Momentarily he saw more. Belcher's hard fist struck him in the region of the solar plexus, and he sprawled backward, with the lone station-agent doing a wild war dance over him.

Mr. Bullton did not struggle. For the time he was altogether too dazed. Belcher stepped back and laughed somewhat wildly. Inspiration had fairly blasted into his dulled brain.

There was his strip of iron to hold the tie together; there was his sledge; there was Bullton's motionless foot and ankle, laid mathematically along the tie.

In five seconds Belcher was down on his knees and had the spiked strip clapped over the silk-shod ankle. In another five seconds the spikes themselves were driven fast.

Belcher tossed the sledge a dozen feet away and grinned at his captive—grinned for a minute only. He sobered quite suddenly. To be sure he had Bullton pinned down in such fashion that he was in no danger whatever, for the switch was locked at both ends; but—the two trains!

His head cleared up curiously, and he bounded across the track to the station and into the closet. He came out with flags and bulging pockets and ran up track a little. He torpedoed the rails very thoroughly and planted red flags between them. He raced back to the station and halted a minute as he heard the Raynor call.

He answered. Then he fell back with a sort of whooping, laughing sigh of relief. The local was stalled away down at Belfield and would wait for the express to pass there.

So, it was all right. Nobody risked being killed, after all. And as suddenly as the tension had been put on him, just as suddenly it snapped and Belcher began chuckling and rubbing his head.

But—just what the deuce had he forgotten just in the last few minutes?

Oh, yes! He'd nailed down the president of the road to one of his own sidings. That was it. Well, he'd go out and have a chat with him, and scare him just for fun.

Quite happily, therefore, Belcher tripped through the awful heat to where the bulky man lay prostrate, exhausted after a fruitless struggle with his bond. Belcher squatted cheerfully beside him, remarking:

"Well, old President Bullton, how's thrings coming?"

"Lemme up!" came hoarsely from the captive.

"Aw, wait a while," said Belcher, pleasantly. "The train isn't due for two or three minutes."

"The what?"

"The train that's going to come into this siding full speed and make you into sausage meat," the station man explained cheerily.

A shriek rose from the red, dripping man.

"Great Scott!" he screamed. "I'm not Bullton, if you mean the president of this road. I'm the secretary of a casket company that—"

"You'll get one cheap, then," Belcher commented.

"—is thinking of building near here. I just drove over from Raynor to look at your freight platform and meet some of your business men—"

'So you're not Bullton!" gasped Belcher, with what seemed to him excellently quick and reasonable thought. "Well, then, if you're not Bullton"—he reached for the sledge—"the best thing I can do is to wipe you right out now."

A hoarse yell for help died away.

"Because, if you're not," explained the station man, "you'll go to work and tell Bullton about this, and I'll lose my job."

"Well, I am Bullton!" choked the prostrate figure. "I'm Bullton, and—"

"Yes, I thought you was Bullton," said Belcher dryly, as he sat down again. "Well, I'm Belcher. Remember Belcher?"

"Oh, yes!"

"Then why didn't you answer one o' those four letters—hey? Didn't I ask you politely to give me a transfer to some live station, or give me a good raise if I had to stay here?"

"Why—they—they must have been overlooked, I think," stuttered the other. "I—meant to give them attention, of course, but—"

"But it wasn't worth while, eh? It was all right to leave me down here, without even a human being to look at, from early morning till late at night. Oh, it was all right! But it's got you tied down good and tight now, and—by ginger, the express is coming!"

"Whatever your name is, let me up. I'll give you a raise. I'll give you a raise, to commence the day you took the job. I swear I will! I'll—"

"Oh, no!" said Mr. Belcher, who was enjoying things with a sweetly clear conscience as he observed anew the locked switches. "You think it over in the next world. See if flowers for the livin' aren't better than flowers for people you've killed off, and still made 'em keep on living."

Then, oddly, brakes began to scream and hiss, and a big train loomed up from the west, slowed down and came to a stop.

Passengers were looking out of the windows. They began pouring out. Right in front was Cousin Tom, who drew a fat salary in the claims department. He gripped Belcher by the shoulder and dragged him aside after one look at the captive.

"Did—you—do—that?" Cousin Tom demanded in one word.

"Certainly," said Belcher, calmly. "That's Bullton. He wouldn't give me a raise. I was playing a joke on him. I—"

"Shut up!" hissed the claims man. "That's no more Bullton that you are, although he looks a little like him. Bullton's right over there in his private car, reading a paper. Go crazy!"

'Huh?" said Belcher.

"Wiggle! Wiggle, you idiot! Throw your arms about in the air! Wiggle! I say, wiggle!"

Belcher wiggled. Indeed, he found it amazingly easy to wiggle just then.

Cousin Tom was waving back the people. He took a terrible, compelling grip on Belcher.

"It's all right, gentlemen. If one of you'll please give me a hand getting him to the baggage car? It's all right, sir, thank you. He's just gone temporarily mad with the heat!"

SALVATION ARMY WORKING FOR REAL SOLDIERS

Commander Eva Booth (right) of the Salvation Army in America, and some of the workers in New York making bandages for the wounded soldiers of the European armies.

GRABS RIFLE BALL

French Aviator Thinks It Is a Strange Insect.

When High in the Air He Stretches Out His Hand and Grasps What to His Amazement Proves to Be Bullet.

London.—A French aviator is reported to have brought from the skies a German rifle bullet which he had caught in his hand. The story goes that he was flying at a height of about seven thousand feet when he suddenly became aware of a small black object close to his head. He thought it was an insect of some kind, and was sufficient of an entomologist to realize that a flying insect at such an altitude was a curiosity. So he stretched out his hand and grasped what to his amazement proved to be a bullet.

He explained afterward that it was evidently a rifle bullet that had been fired almost vertically and had reached its utmost elevation. He arrived on his aeroplane just at the moment when the bullet slowly turned over and was about to fall again.

Looking for bullets in the air is a new interest, and calculations based on the known muzzle velocity of the rifles are made as to the most favorable altitudes. A wag suggests "catch bullets" as a new aerodrome game after the war.

The "kite balloons" employed by the Germans promptly became "German sausages," in the language of Tommy Atkins. They are not first-rate craft for observation, being stationary, but they are not so easy to bring down as aeroplanes. "The sausage drive," therefore, provides good sport for bomb droppers.

A story is told in the Aeroplane of an officer of high rank who had never before been up in an aeroplane, and who was taken up as an observer by an English pilot. Coming into the fire zone the aeroplane was hit several times and one of the contact cables was cut through, rendering the task of keeping the machine in hand almost impossible. The pilot very skillfully, however, managed to make a safe descent and to land within his own lines.

Then his passenger, who had not in the least understood what had happened, roundly abused him for his cowardice. When the situation was explained, and he realized that he had had a narrow escape with his life, he was duly apologetic and grateful.

Some curious souvenirs are in possession of members of the corps. There are, for example, altimeters, speed indicators and revolution indicators pierced and smashed by bullets.

TRAGEDY OF LAW'S DELAY

Girl Injured in Street Car Accident Unable to Collect Damages Owing to Company's Bankruptcy.

New York.—Harriett Nugent, the young girl who has just been discharged from the King's county hospital to which place she was taken when found wandering in a pitiable condition, due to lack of nourishment, on a Brooklyn street, is the principal figure in one of the most interesting phases of the law's delay ever written of. When three years old Harriett was run over by a Madison street car and badly crippled. Benjamin Oppenheim, a prominent young attorney,

Harriett Nugent.

took her case to court and received a verdict of $5,000 against the company. The Metropolitan Street Railroad company refused to pay this claim and managed by devious ways to have Benjamin Oppenheim disbarred. One of the employees of the company was told to burn certain vouchers he had in his possession, but believing they would some day be of value to him did not do so. In 1915 this man's landlady discovered among the papers the data which proved that Oppenheim was wrongfully disbarred. Her evidence restored him to the bar. The verdict received by him 17 years ago has now, with interest, reached the sum of $14,000, but still the girl cannot, because of the bankruptcy of the street railway company, collect the amount of her judgment.

REFUSES TO LEAVE LEPER

Wife and Her Two Children Share Fate of Victim of Terrible Disease.

Wilkes-Barre, Pa.—In one of the two homes which they own Joseph Norman, aged thirty-two, with his wife and two children, are shut completely off from the world. The wife and children are prisoners because they chose to risk leprosy to be with the afflicted husband and father. For experts have declared Norman to be a leper. Already the skin on his face bears unmistakable evidence of the dread malady.

When convincing proof had been obtained that Norman was a leper the door of his home was opened for the escape of wife and children. Mrs. Norman was instructed to cut away from her husband forever. She left the house because she believed she must. Next day she took her little sons and with them went to the city officials and begged to be allowed to return. They endeavored to dissuade her.

"I cannot live without my husband," she cried, falling on her knees. "I was happy as his sweetheart. I was happy when he made me his wife. I have been happy during the 11 years that we have lived together and struggled to lay aside a little money for the rainy day. My love has been fanned into a flame by his goodness and his care of me. I became his wife for better or for worse. I have tried to be a kind, dutiful and loving wife. I have borne him children, whom we both love."

MUSIC FOR BATTLE

German Band Serenades Soldiers on Firing Line.

Musicians Lie in Advanced Trenches All Night and Play Melodies Appropriate to Action—Leaders Get Iron Cross.

Berlin.—A concert in the firing line is thus described by Bandmaster Adolf Becker with one of the German armies in France:

"After a long march we went into camp at G—— and promised ourselves a good night's rest. At 2:30 we were suddenly and rudely waked up; our outposts had come into touch with strong French forces and the whole camp suddenly became alive. A sharp fight was soon in progress. The French artillery was firing incessantly from a covered position. Their shells came with a sharp whiz, to explode with a mighty crash. Their infantry also kept up a hot fire. I went forward with my musicians in a covered position and met Colonel von R——, who ordered me to contribute my part to this infernal concert.

"I crawled forward, therefore, with my men to the most advanced trench, asked them to get out their instruments, and we played to the great amusement of the troops the beautiful air, 'I Feel So Fine in the Evening.' After some time the moon came out from behind a thick bank of clouds and lit up the battlefield with its bursting shells, and we gave it a welcome with the melody, 'Good Moon, You Move So Quietly,' and the soldiers joined in with spirit.

"Somewhat later the French attempted a forward movement, and we promptly received them with 'Dolly, You Are the Light of my Eyes.' The French did not seem to trust this assurance, however, for they hastily withdrew, to the resounding laughter of our men, who did splendid shooting. In order to make it clear to the French just whom they had in their front, I next struck up the fierce Radetzki march, and just as the rising sun was coloring the east blood-red, I closed the concert with the hopeful choral, 'Fair Beams the Morning Star.' Many of the soldiers, holding their rifles in firing position, joined in lustily."

Convict Wants Speedy Death.

Sacramento, Cal.—Immediate death via the hangman's noose is the plea of Samuel Swearington, under sentence at Sacramento. He was asked if he had any preference as to the time of death. "Make it as soon as possible, your honor. Tomorrow would suit me. I want it over with," he replied.

SAYS WOMEN WILL FIGHT

Miss Pankhurst Declares Suffragists Will Go to War if They Are Needed.

New York.—Miss Christabel Pankhurst, famous daughter of her equally famous mother, the leader of the militant suffragists of Great Britain, declares that the women are ready to go to war if the government wants

Miss Christabel Pankhurst.

them. Miss Pankhurst is making a lecturing tour through the larger cities of the country. She recently received the degree of LL.B. from one of the colleges in England, and is here shown in the cap and gown worn on that occasion.

3,000 MILES TO BURY A DOG

Young Woman Ends Holiday in New York When Pet Dies in California.

New York.—When a young woman from San Diego, Cal., ran out of her room on the fifteenth floor of the McAlpin with a crumpled telegram in her hand and crying, "She's dead, she's dead!" the clerk for that floor did what she could to comfort the grief-stricken one. Ordinary measures failed, and the young woman became hysterical. Mrs. Lois Hughes, the manager of the woman's floor, was telephoned for and hurried up at the top speed of the elevator.

Mrs. Hughes sent for the young woman's father and brother. One took the telegram and read it. They looked one at another, the elder helplessly, and the younger man defiantly.

"She'll insist upon going straight back home," said the father.

"Fiddlesticks!" exclaimed the brother. "I am not going to have my holiday spoiled by her foolishness. I am going to stay right here in New York as long as we planned."

"What a heartless son!" said Mrs. Hughes to herself.

"No use making such a fuss over a dog, anyhow," went on the younger man.

It was Mrs. Hughes' time to feel like going into hysterics.

So yesterday afternoon the young woman and her father, sure enough, took the train for home. The brother stayed on.

Glimpses of Old Prague

AFTER [illegible] seen the beauti[illegible] of Prague with it[illegible] points of interest, [illegible]onders why it is [illegible] of our European tourists t[illegible]teps in that direction, write[illegible]Machotka Chapin in the Los [illegible] Times. Surely no other city [illegible]more fascinating history or mo[illegible]nt and beautiful monuments of[illegible]iddle ages. The history of Bo[illegible]s comparatively unfamiliar to[illegible] English and American travele[illegible]n consequence one of the mos[illegible]cent of the old European citi[illegible]en passed by for those which[illegible]er known and better advertise[illegible] the traveler who does pay a v[illegible]he "hundred-towered Prague"[illegible]ind himself well repaid for his[illegible]e and will come away with so[illegible]orgettable mind-pictures and in[illegible]ions.

The new sec[illegible] of the city, the "Neustadt," pre[illegible]s a brilliant and ever-varied stree[illegible]cture. Not only the feminine half [illegible]humanity contributes to the life [illegible]d color, for the streets are full of soldiers and army officers in their striking uniforms.

Crooked Streets of Old Town.

The shops are very attractive and have as pleasing an array of wares and as well displayed as it would be possible to find anywhere. The three principal streets, Wenzelsplatz, Gaben and Ferdinand, are wide and beautiful, and one is the more impressed by them on account of the neighboring streets of the "Altstadt," or old town, which are truly a marvel of narrowness and crookedness. The unwary traveler will often wander up some much-twisted way only to find it end in a solid wall of houses from which there is apparently no exit. In a dark corner will be a low archway leading to a narrow passage underneath the houses from whence one enters onto another street. A stranger quickly loses his bearings, and one cannot help thinking, as one

CITY HALL FROM ACROSS THE ELBE

follows the sharp turnings of the dark and high-walled streets, what lovely places they must have made for rough and unlawful deeds in the days when Prague was a center for the most noble as well as the most ignoble of Europe's bold spirits. Here in the old town one finds also the "Carolinium," the oldest university on the continent, founded by Karl IV in 1348, and somber enough with its high and gloomy walls.

From the Wenzelsplatz one follows the Ferdinand strasse down to Maldau river, which flows through the middle of the city. Never shall I forget the view which burst upon me as I came abruptly onto the wide and beautiful quay. At my feet flowed the wide stream, bordered on the other side by low-hanging trees gorgeous in their autumn foliage. White buildings shone through the open spaces, mills and factories using the river power for their machines. Behind clustered the roofs and spires of the "Klein-Seite," the oldest portion of the city, and above it all, a picture never to be forgotten, rose a high hill crowned by the great clustering buildings of the Hradschin and the noble towers of the St. Vitus cathedral rising against the rosy evening sky. The Hradschin is the ancient palace of the Bohemian kings, begun by Karl IV in the early part of the fourteenth century and later renovated by Maria Theresa. No more magnificent site for a palace could possibly be found, and I stood for many minutes spellbound by the lovely picture.

I crossed the river on the Karlsbruecke, the oldest of the seven bridges which span the Moldau, and the most beautiful. It also was built by Karl IV, and is a monument to medieval architecture. At intervals across the bridge are placed huge statues of saints and ancient kings, and there is also a beautiful gilded statue of the crucifixion.

Arriving on the other side of the Moldau one is carried back into the middle ages. The sidewalks are barely wide enough to allow a single person to pass, and the high walls of old palaces, with heavy iron doors and gargoyles grinning from the cornices, rise on every side. Here in the middle of the quarter, surrounded on every side by buildings ancient and modern, is a gem of seventeenth century architecture—the Wallenstein palace. The outside walls are plain and uninviting, and one would not believe that they inclose such handsome rooms. I walked unchallenged through the doorway and into a big square court. Here a rosy-cheeked German woman answered my summons and consented to show me the rooms which are open to the public.

The way to Hradschin led through a tangle of narrow, twisted streets, and finally up a long flight of stone stairs, which I climbed heroically without, but I am sure there semed to be twice that many. But I felt more than repaid for my trouble when I reached the top and turned to look at the beautiful view spread out below at the river, and, beyond, the spires of Prague's 105 churches. The blue haze of the late afternoon shrouded the horizon, and the yellows and reds of the autumn-clad trees along the river made a brilliant spot of color in the foreground. The quaint tower on the farther side of the Karlsbruecke lay directly beneath me, to the right the handsome new Bohemian National theater, and behind the buildings and towers of "Altstadt" and "Josephstadt" clustered in picturesque confusion.

The buildings of the palace on Hradschin are mostly empty now or reserved for the use of the palace guard, and there are comparatively few of the 440 rooms which are open to the public. My guide led the way into an immense saal, the "Tourney Hall," where tournaments on horseback used to be held and which is said to be the largest hall in Europe. We then entered the throne room, a large, high hall with a collection of Prague student flags over the doorway. The council chamber, on the second floor, was one of the most interesting rooms in the palace.

Cathedral Is Magnificent.

After seeing several other rooms of minor interest, I left the palace buildings and went down a narrow street to the entrance to the cathedral. It is a beautiful structure in the purest French Gothic style, with five graceful towers. It was begun in 1344 by Karl IV, and even now, after six centuries, it is still unfinished. The inside is magnificent, and nearly every stone bears a history. Probably the most celebrated of its contents is the beautiful silver coffin of St. John of Nepomuk, weighing about four thousand two hundred pounds, and with a large canopy held by four life-sized silver angel figures given by Maria Theresa.

Kept Good Fortune Secret.

"The other evening I was helping my wife to hang pictures," said a man. "While I was high up on the ladder waiting to get the hangers, I mechanically put my hand in the pocket of a pair of trousers. Incidentally, I had not had them on for years. I almost fell off when I felt a bill. At that moment, however, my wife returned. Naturally, I couldn't at once determine the extent of my good fortune. But I hung the particular picture on which I was then working in record time. Then I went to the kitchen. It turned out to be a five-spot. Some luck, boy?" "What did your wife say when you told her?" I asked. "Did you divide up?" "What? Who told her? Me? Not on your life. I just rushed back and continued to hang pictures with renewed vigor!"

Ancients Fond of Perfumes.

The ancients used to burn perfume before the altars of their gods, believing that the sweet scents were pleasurable to them. Nowhere was perfume more lavishly used than by the ancient Egyptians. In the temple of Isis, sweet incense was always kept burning before the altar by the priests, and on extraordinary occasions the king himself performed this ceremony. The great god Ra always had three kinds of incense burned before him. Horus Ambeis, the dog-headed Thoth; Neith, goddess of wisdom; the cat-headed Pshat, and the sacred Ibis, all were the recipients of scented offerings.

Medicine Along the Nile.

All children—and most grownups—object to medicines in general, and bad-tasting doses in particular. Imagine the feelings of the little Egyptian boy in the year 800 B. C., who had to swallow this favorite prescription of the physicians along the Nile: "Take a great scarabaeus beetle, cut off his head and wings, and boil him; put him in oil and lay him out; then cook his head and wings, put them in snake fat, boil and let the patient drink the mixture." The modern Egyptian uses almost precisely the same recipe, excepting that the snake fat is replaced by modern oil.

Oil Prevents Fogs.

Everyone knows the influence oil has upon stormy seas, but only recently has the experiment been tried of preventing fog with the use of oil. The fogs which are said to be susceptible to this treatment are those caused by the condensation of water vapor over certain rivers, such as has been observed on the Rhone and Saone. A French scientist suggests pouring oil into these rivers. The cost would apparently be small, since a very small quantity of oil spreads out until it covers a large area, with a film only one two-hundredth of a millimeter in thickness.

Washing Soda for Burns.

For a tiny burn dip a crystal of common washing soda in water and rub it over the injury. This eases the pain almost instantly. Extensive burns may be covered with a paste of washing soda and water (this is best when the skin has not been broken). If the skin is broken mop the surface with a solution of sodium carbonate (washing soda), a teaspoonful dissolved in a pint of clean boiled water. After a few minutes cover injury with clean gauze which been soaked in the soda solution, on top of the gauze spread cotton to exclude the air and allay Lime water and linseed oil or water and olive oil, equal parts each mixed, is also a very old and efficient remedy.

The Banana.

The thoroughly ripe banana (or less ripe fruit, after cooking) is a very useful and wholesome addition to the dietary. In hot weather the baked banana makes an excellent substitute for meat—in fact at any season it may be used as an "extra vegetable." To prepare the fruit for baking, wash the bananas, cut half an inch from each end of the banana, and then arrange the bananas on a tin plate (pie plate), and place in the oven to bake. They will be ready for use when the skin wrinkles and juice flows after pricking the skin with a fork. They are quite "done" when the pierced fruit is soft. They may be eaten as one does a baked potato—seasoned with butter, pepper and salt.